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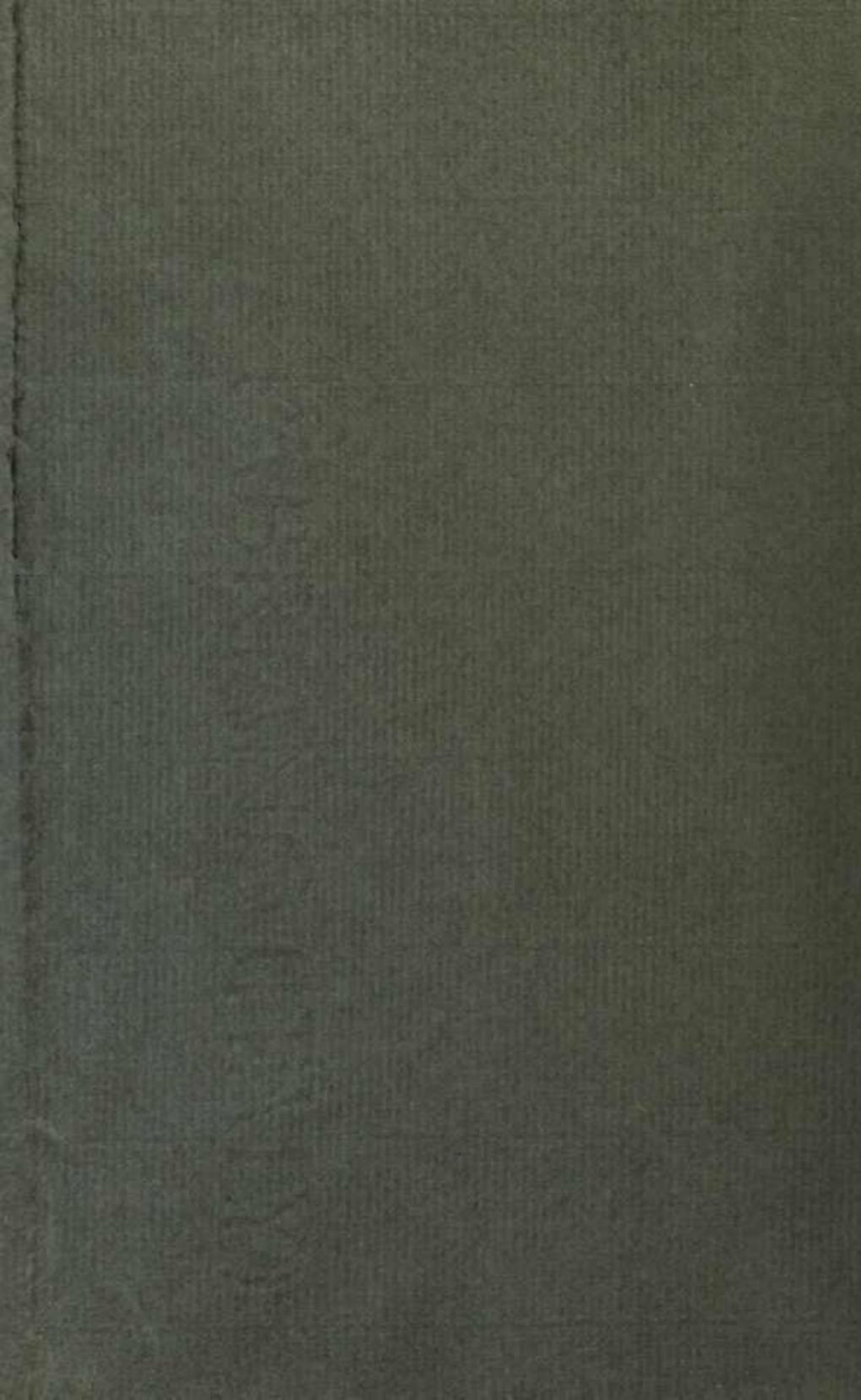
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THE *SOUL of WOMAN*

AN INTERPRETATION *of* THE
PHILOSOPHY *of* FEMINISM

PAUL JORDAN SMITH

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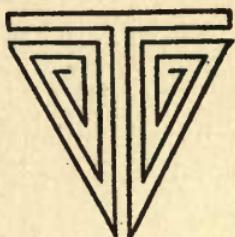


THE SOUL OF WOMAN

THE SOUL *of* WOMAN

AN INTERPRETATION OF
THE PHILOSOPHY OF FEMINISM

BY
PAUL JORDAN SMITH



1885

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*Think of womanhood, and you to be a
woman;
The creation is womanhood;
Have I not said that womanhood in-
volves all?
Have I not told how the universe has
nothing better than the best woman-
hood?*

—WALT WHITMAN.

*Follow after thyself—what says thy
conscience?—thou shalt be that which
thou art—let the highest self-expression
be thy highest expression.*

—FREDERICK NIETZSCHE.

FOREWORD

The new Feminism has created a revolution in the ranks of the woman movement. It has made a startling announcement to a body busily engaged in promoting the claims for suffrage and the cause of social reform. It declares that the primary purpose of woman is spiritual; that suffrage and social reform are good enough in their way, but that woman as woman has a greater value to contribute to Life, and that she must do this at all costs. Far from being conservative, however, the Feminists have gone away and ahead of their sisters in proposing revolutionary social and ethical changes, and are awakening astonished protests everywhere. And this has led us to a fresh consideration of the spiritual life of woman, and we turn to those great seers of modern literature who have been able to express most powerfully what they have been vouchsafed to see of the Soul of Woman.

FOREWORD

So, in a very brief way, the author of this little booklet has set down a few of the things that the interpreters have said, in the hope that in some who have been hostile, there will be evoked a new sympathy for the motives if not for the ideals of Feminism.

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I.

FOR a mere man, in these sensitive times of the newness of Feminism, to presume to speak of the Soul of Woman, it is necessary at the outset, if not to state his intentions, to state at least his attitude of mind toward the movement which is the modern expression of that soul. It will, then, be necessary for the author to declare himself a firm believer in the rights of woman, the right of suffrage, of economic equality and independence. He rejoices in the recent victories of woman at the ballot box, and looks forward to still greater victories in the days to come. The enfranchisement of woman has been an imperative need, not only for woman, but also for the human race. He recognizes the fact that in the attainments thus far reached a struggle has been necessary, and that certain militant tendencies have been very natural accompaniments of the holy war.

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Woman in the effort to become politically emancipated has met the superstitions of man, and the bigotry of man, and the savage inclinations and barbaric institutions of man; and all these things she has had to meet on their respective levels. This has brought about the fear that the woman movement will rob the world of its gentler feminine spirit; and indeed the facts have appeared, at first glance, to justify this apprehension. In general, all social movements not only create their necessary types, but they also attract those who by temperament are dissatisfied with and rebel against the usual. This phenomenon is common to all new social and religious movements. The minds of those who have not been enabled to look beyond these vagaries and whimsicalities, not to say abnormalities, have confused the pathological incidents of this great and profound movement with its revolutionary end and ideal.

But now that so much has been

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accomplished; now that the foundation has been laid and the severest struggle is over; now that the man of culture has, with exceptional instances, been converted; now is the time to address ourselves to the more fundamental aims and the higher needs that have all along been the prompting motives of the leaders.

It can now be seen that "enfranchisement is not freedom," nor the solution of all our human ills; that it is at best but a leverage, and often a very ineffectual one, by which certain more fundamental needs may be secured.

We are now prepared to listen to the more advanced German leaders, and to Olive Schreiner, Mr. Havelock Ellis, or to that brave Scandinavian soul, Ellen Key.

These have seen that "it is not enough to claim woman's place as a human being, but to claim woman's place as woman; that we are not now so much concerned with the rights of women to be like men, as

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to understand their right to be unlike men."

It is to Ellen Key in particular that we must look for the interpretation of the new and yet old ideals. She has that profound insight that enables her to read the heart-longings and aspirations of our time. She interprets the normal woman with the mother ideal and the race instinct. She would reconcile eugenics with love; the social demands of the race with the individual claims of the heart. To do this has required a very subtle and intimate knowledge of the psychology, both of the individual woman as distinct from that of man, and of the woman movement. And this knowledge is necessary to an adequate understanding of any considerable movement.

I am quite aware of a sort of superficial protest against such analyses as have been made by Prof. W. I. Thomas in *Sex and Society*. But I am sure it is an unreflective criticism, and am equally sure that no

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progress can be made where facts are persistently ignored and where we rely merely upon 18th Century phrases about "rights" and "liberties" and "equalities." The sociologists and anthropologists and psychologists, with all their dry-as-dust technicalities, have been necessary to a clear understanding of social phenomena, and certainly any safe social theory cannot be divorced from these.

Woman has been the conserver of our greatest social values. Man has been aggressive and not infrequently iconoclastic. And these life attitudes have a physiological basis to guarantee their permanence. It is found, for example, that the rate of anabolism, or tissue construction, is higher in woman than in man, and conversely, that katabolism, or tissue degeneration, is more rapid in man than in woman. There is also a significant difference in the number of leucocytes present in any given blood area of man or woman. Both

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anatomically and physiologically woman has always been more nearly the normal than man. The extremes of cephalic index, or skull measurement, have always been corrected by the woman. These are facts that lie back of economic change and racial custom and are expressions from the bed rock of human nature. It is axiomatic in biological science that structure and function go hand in hand. And the whole structure of woman indicates conservation; that of man, aggression. Not for long will either of these be untrue to the basic demands of their nature.

Moreover, physiological difference of function is accompanied by psychic difference, and, while the habits peculiar to an age, or arising from a class through a number of epochs may be quickly changed, the great psychic modifications that have come down from the beginning of associated human life are monumental facts not to be explained away by the theorist or ignored by the enthusiast.

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To these facts life simply must be adjusted.

Woman, then, is to be accepted as the great conserver of social values. Whatever her social or political position in times past, woman has held most tenaciously to established institutions, has recognized their values from one point of view or another, and has, with instinctive wisdom, resisted dangerous innovations. To be sure, the innovations were oftentimes needful, but most needful from the racial standpoint was it that humanity should be ready for the change. It may be pointed out that in many recent radical movements, woman has been the aggressor, but I think it safe to say that in every instance so noted it will be found on analysis that this stand has been taken as a means of conserving a more fundamental social and racial value. Woman became radically conservative; for the sake of conservatism, woman became radical. It follows, therefore, that woman should have equal voice in all social

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development. But the important consideration that must ever be borne in mind is that she must play her part as woman, and yield to society the full benefit of her nature as the complement to man. Her new work must not destroy nor inhibit, but rather call forth the richness peculiar to her personality.

The mother quality is demanded by human society as well as by the family. We need constantly to be reminded that life is not justified by what we have thus far attained, that we are a long way from our ideal humanity, and that we are not to strive alone for present values, but for the beyond-man,—the superman. We are to remember Nietzsche's caution that we are a bridge and not the goal. And it is the woman nature to constantly remind society of that ideal and reshape it to that great end. And I believe that, all along, the deep and underlying motive and inspiration of the woman movement, born of the aspiring mother heart, yearn-

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ing over the need of the generations to be, has been in the interest of this fundamental value. Woman has witnessed with tortured soul an anarchic and race-indifferent man, rearing institutions, and building machinery to grind out dollars for present need and making deformities of little children, and maiming the mothers of the future. She demands to be a citizen that she may mother the world.

Nor do her aspirations end with the establishment of economic change. The increasing interest in the science of eugenics with its urgent appeal to the laws of life belie that. The serious work of the world is seen to be, not the armament of nations, nor the rates of tariff, nor the assembling of legislators, but the enhancement of life. The laws of heredity are to be questioned, sanitation is to be enforced, and the whole matter of marriage is to be put on a radically different basis. Not Life for institutions, but institutions for Life is the new cry.

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Selection must be applied to life, and this selection must be free from economic taint. Woman must have the right of free selection, and must not be forced, because of any economic consideration, either to enter or to maintain a marriage relation that is distasteful. Absolute freedom of selection, on the part of woman, of the father of her child is one of the essential rights of motherhood, and is necessary to the larger life of the race. And this can be accomplished only by woman, who, unlike man, has little faith in hard and fast rules for life, but who, with superior intuition, would reconcile eugenics with love. She has no sympathy with what Ellen Key has called "the breeding rules of Spartan evolutionism." "The line of life," says that great writer, is in the direction of "freedom for love's selection, under conditions favorable to the race; limitation of the freedom of procreation, where the conditions are unfavorable to the race." This line

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of life points to a time of able bodied fathers and mothers, capable physically, mentally and spiritually of urging the coming generation to a yet higher lift. All of this simply means that human love has got to be reckoned with as a force in society, and must be consciously given its full right in human development for the sake of the race.

A great deal of misapprehension has gathered around the work of Ellen Key in this particular; and the timid have held up their hands in horror because of the similar boldness of Miss Dora Marsden in the later issues of the *London Freewoman*. Yet all of this is simply the demand on the one hand for a safe selection in the parentage of the race, and on the other, an insistence on the freedom of personality development which is also fundamentally needful to the race.

Our age needs a quickening sense of the will-to-live. An industrial era, a man-made system of laws and iron

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bound codes, have transformed Life into existence, and whole multitudes of those who are to be the parents of the future have the chambers of their lives utterly darkened, and the walls made bare. There is no touch of the beautiful to quicken, no inspiration of the good, no knowledge of the true. They are divorced from the natural, and debarred from making marriage between the artificial and the beautiful. Thus we have come all along the paths of life to what Nietzsche calls the "canonization of the commonplace." A healthy will-to-live will send a new fire along the veins and arteries of humanity and create anew the normal desires of the soul of man.

Woman has sensed the heart and life needs of the world, and with her advent as a controlling factor in the social and political world comes the knell to the cruel mechanism and deadly formalism of the past. For a new force comes with woman as woman, a psychic factor, viewed in

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the past with something like derision, but now at last accorded a hearing at the bar of learning. The heart of the world, better than its head, was aware that the "concept" is not faithful to life, that the "idea" does not explain the best of the world, that the intellect but touches the borderland of the real world, and that in the solution of the problems of life, somewhat is needed to supplement mere logic—something higher than logic. Even instinct is sometimes truer than intellect; Nietzsche calls it the true wisdom. But the higher thing is intuition. And Henri Bergson has for the first time in the history of philosophy recognized its creative function. And Maurice Maeterlinck, in the *Treasure of the Humble*, points out that the intuition of woman is more sound than reasoned knowledge, that it sees deeper and interprets more truly than the judgment. And what is more needed in this society of struggling, hoping, longing, human hearts

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than the understanding and sympathizing soul? We have had quite enough of blind and unenlightened sentimentality, but we need an expression in society of the knowing heart.

And what is this but saying that woman is the great spiritual conservator? After possessing the right to citizenship, "woman's greatest right is to build up, to help, to console, to love." And we have come to know that the thing we need most to build up is personality. We need personality conservation. We have enough integers, and cogs, and mediocrities; to enrich the stream of life and to prepare for the greater achievements that lie ahead, we need much-alive and dynamic persons, creators, transformers, regenerators. We need the expression of fine feminine personality in woman, independent and free; and a robust, vigorous and manly personality in man.

This requires more than economic

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or political emancipation; and yet, after these first steps have been socially taken, the greater liberty remains to be achieved by individuals.

"And who am I and what is liberty?" asked Prometheus. "Liberty is the freedom to become free," answered Herakles.*

The woman problem comes at last to where all great problems must come, to the sacredness of the person. In the highest sense, woman asks her freedom that, removing economic fetters and political imbecilities, and ethical perversions, her spiritual nature may expand; and this not alone for her sake, but for the salvation of the human race.

And here, as protagonist of the Soul of Woman in the great life-drama, comes modern literature. In poem, drama, essay and novel, the seers of this more sensitive age are addressing themselves to the high task of removing, as best they can, the ancient barriers that have kept

*From *Herakles*, by George Cabot Lodge.

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woman from her larger heritage, and have withheld from the race some of its most life-quicken^g forces. Even the briefest glance at the work of some of our men and women of letters will be sufficient to show us that we are on our way to a profound new knowledge and appreciation of what woman means to the spiritual life of mankind.

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II.

THIS great personality preacher was the first among moderns to emphasize the need of spiritual freedom for women. From *Love's Comedy* to *The Lady from the Sea*, Ibsen demands for woman this "freedom to become free."¹ Ibsen knew the meaning of that phrase long before George Cabot Lodge uttered it. He knew the futility of mere freedom. He understood the blind desperate, inarticulate children of liberty in all ages, and of both sexes. He knew that liberty is not enough—that those who seek may not find until they are ready; that even if the door be opened to those who knock, and they be allowed to enter, they may take only what they are able to receive. When they have suffered enough, and haply have enjoyed enough, they may take all—but not yet. The great freedom is the freedom to grow worthy of freedom—to become free.

^{1.}
HENRIK
IBSEN

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Nora must indeed go out of *The Doll's House*, but when she would, incontinent, rush forth to see all the world's woes through her new vision, Ibsen smiles ironically. For him one step at a time is sufficient. And the great thing now is emancipation, for the necessity for that is clear. When the necessity for other things is clear also, then they, too, will follow.

So in *The Lady from the Sea*, Ellida is made say to her husband, after she has been allowed the freedom of choice,—“Now I can come to you of my own will, and in my own responsibility.” That is the splendid thing—to be able to act on one's own responsibility. But that requires self-realization, that is to say, personality.

And hence Ibsen urges the claim of the broader human quality of woman.

“Thou art, first and foremost, wife and mother,” says Helmer. And Nora replies, “I believe that I am, first and foremost, a human being;

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I, as well as thou—or in any case, that I should endeavor to become one."

But with all the freedom of the new day, with all the breaking of the chains, Ibsen saw that deep down in the heart of things was a spiritual quality of gentleness; and in the first edition of *The Pretenders*, he declares: "To love, to sacrifice all, and to forget,—that is the saga of womankind."

Ellen Key, in *The Torpedo Under The Ark*, has given a faithful summary of the Feminism of her great teacher.

"That woman's love—if the word is taken in its largest, most comprehensive sense—more surely than any other feeling divines the way to the greater happiness for the individual, as well as for the whole race, is Ibsen's great belief regarding woman. He sees her essential nature as *erotic* and *maternal devotion*. From this devotion, to which he pardons everything, he hopes also for everything.

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He knows that contingencies of a thousand kinds, some of which he has painted in his profound poem 'Transformations,' will always obstruct the way of man's chances of happiness; that before the red abysses of the heart, before the obscure, night-enmantled regions of the soul, before the white and black magic of sympathy and antipathy, before the delusive play of the senses and the blind encounters of chance, woman also stands powerless. But he not only hopes that woman, through the explosive character of her nature, will serve as the best torpedo for the old ark, he believes also that she will succeed in renewing the blood of humanity by means of new life-values, new ethical motives, a new idealism, a new faith. But this can happen only if she develop her own individuality; which implies that she maintain the deep, essential characteristics which distinguish her from man.

"Then will all the dream beauty,

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the depth of presentiment in the soul-life of the modern woman be able to form the future and assume shape in the whole life of man, above all in the erotic union so that this will maintain its entire strength and soundness through its own content and preserve an ever increasing freedom and delicacy in all its forms of expression."

For a sympathetic understanding of the Soul of woman no seer has surpassed Robert Browning, who, in *The Ring and the Book*, creates Pompilia, one of those souls through whom

"God stooping, shows sufficient of
His light
For us i' the dark to rise by."

Not a fighter like Ibsen, with none of the bitterness of Strindberg, Browning sees the depths, the intuitive power, the sensitive spiritual nature of the essential woman.

He knows, through an intuition

^{2.}
ROBERT
BROWNING

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not unlike that of woman, the innerness of woman's most whimsical moods. He is able to see their larger significance. Above all, Browning knows the depth of woman's yearning for companionship. Not for the bearing of flesh and blood children alone does she yearn, but for those spiritual children born of the great marriage of those who "know themselves into one but marry never They are man and wife at once when the true time is." For woman in her innermost spirit wants love for the life that is as well as for the life that is to be, believing that by the enhancement of her personality, and that of her mate, the life to come must, too, be the richer. It is not enough that we should repopulate the world; we should enrich it. Love is for growth. The understanding heart quickens the Soul.

"For women
There is no good of life but love—
but love!

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What else looks good, is some shade
flung from love
Never cheat yourself but one in-
stant! Love,
Give love, ask only love, and leave
the rest!"

On the surface Strindberg is as much committed to misogyny as, in his opinion, Ibsen was committed to gynaeolatry. The fact that most readers of Strindberg stop here has been the cause of much misunderstanding. For what seems hate on the surface is sometimes a mask for love. With Strindberg, one might almost say that it is a mask for worship. But he was able as no one else to analyze both hate and love, and to let us see most clearly the bitter, the eternal struggle of the sexes. He is the master chemist of the passions.

In *Comrades* we find Strindberg fearing the outcome of the sex struggle: "In this war to the death between the two sexes, it would ap-

^{3.}
AUGUST
STRINDBERG

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pear that the less honest and more perverse would come out conqueror, since the chance of man's gaining the battle is very dubious, handicapped as he is by an inbred respect for woman, without counting the advantage that he gives her in supporting her and leaving her time to equip herself for the fight." He is, in a word, afraid, like Nietzsche, of an effeminate world whose destinies should be in the hands of "emancipated" women.

And yet when Strindberg speaks for himself in *Woman Hatred and Woman Worship*, he says: "As I have the reputation of being a woman-hater, and people amuse themselves by calling me one, I am forced to ask myself if I really am one. On looking back at my past life, I discover that, ever since I became a man, I have lived in regular relations with women, and that their presence has aroused pleasant feelings in me, in so far as they have remained women towards me. But

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when they have behaved as the rivals of man, neglected their beauty and lost their charm, I have detested them by dint of natural and sound instinct, for in them I have sensed something of man, and an element of my own sex which I detest from the bottom of my heart. Consequently as I have been married twice and had five children, it is not likely that I should be a woman hater." Again, in a passage quoted by Lind-Af-Hageby, in a biography of Strindberg: "To return to woman was to me to come back to nature and thus renewed my power to think, act and fight I have always worshipped women, these enchanting, criminal minxes whose worst crimes are not registered in criminal statistics. But I have had sufficiently bad—or good—taste to tell them the truth, and they have revenged themselves by calling me woman-hater."

The attitude revealed here is born in part of a keen knowledge of

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human sex-psychology, and in part of the limitations of bitter experience. There is of necessity a difference of outlook where there are such fundamental physiological and psychic differences. Differences of function have embedded themselves in structure, and express themselves in complementary fashion. What Strindberg failed to see, through the blinding pain of bitter personal experience, was that this fundamental spiritual difference is precisely what makes it so imperative for the world that woman's attitude toward life be expressed.

Then, too, the great Scandinavian often confused what is physiologically and psychologically fundamental to woman with those acquired characteristics that have come as a result of her response to economic stimuli and the social forces that have played upon her in the comparatively recent centuries. Those who know *Why Women are So*,*

*"Why Women Are So," by Mary Roberts Rinehart.

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will see the superficiality of much of Strindberg and Nietzsche without failing also to appreciate their depth.

Above all, in estimating the value of Strindberg's attitude toward women, one must keep in mind the personal equation. The gods dealt hardly with this worshipper of woman, and in the strange perversity of things he was led to marriage with the three women he should have never met. And through these misfortunes he acquired that laboratory experience in the hatreds of the sexes.

But any two beings, caged for long together, will know something of that manifestation of the will-to-power which leads to attempted dominance of one by the other. And when those two beings chance to be so unsuited to one another as Strindberg and each of his successive wives, that conflict for mastery will end in tragedy. But that is not the fault of woman. It is not essentially the conflict of the sexes. It is the conflict of the jangling wills of Life.

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Maeterlinck's *Monna Vanna* is a gospel to the radical Feminist. Here the modern woman speaks with her ancient gentleness allied to a new quality of conscious knowledge — a new dignity and erectness.

Vanna is the conservative radical. In her essential womanhood she exalts Life above all things and love in Life she exalts above even principles and moralities. For there is a higher morality than that of the codes, and in this consciousness her timorousness before the conventions fades. She knows the sacredness of Life and the value of love; compared to these living realities, what are dead and formal phrases? Dionysos comes before Apollo! To save the lives of the people of Pisa is worth more than to be what men call "pure;" to take that risk for life is the truest purity. To save the life of Prinzivalle is worth more than the formal truth which her crazed and jealous husband cannot bear; to lie for life and love is the highest

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truth. To lie for life's sake is not a lie; the forcing of such an indignity upon the human soul is the great lie.

The task of the new Feminism will include an educational program which will endeavor to prevent just such situations from arising.

But woman, to Maurice Maeterlinck, is a conserver of still higher things than these. Turn to those exquisite things in his essay on Women in *The Treasure of the Humble*:

"In these domains also are the laws unknown. Far above our heads, in the very centre of the sky, shines the star of our destined love; and it is in the atmosphere of that star, and illumined by its rays, that every passion that stirs us will come to life, even to the end. And though we choose to right or to left of us, on the heights or in the shallows; though, in our struggle to break through the enchanted circle that is drawn around all the acts of our life, we do violence to the instinct

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that moves us, and try our hardest to choose against the choice of destiny, yet shall the woman we elect always have come to us straight from the unvarying star. And if, like Don Juan, we take a thousand and three to our embraces, still shall we find, on that evening when arms fall asunder and lips disunite, that it is always the same woman, good or bad, tender or cruel, loving or faithless, that is standing before us."

To the Belgian mystic women are possessed of a naturalness unknown to man. Sooner than man do they discern the will of the cosmos, and they hasten to obey, for. . .

"It would seem that women are more largely swayed by destiny than ourselves. They submit to its decrees with far more simplicity; nor is there sincerity in the resistance they offer. They are still nearer to God, and yield themselves with less reserve to the pure workings of the mystery. And therefore it is, doubt-

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less, that all the incidents in our life in which they take part seem to bring us nearer to what might almost be the very fountain-head of destiny. It is above all when by their side that moments come, unexpectedly, when a 'clear presentiment' flashes across us, a presentiment of a life that does not always seem parallel to the life we know of. They lead us close to the gates of our being. May it not be during one of those profound moments, when his head is pillow'd on a woman's breast, that the hero learns to know the strength and steadfastness of his star? And indeed will any true sentiment of the future ever come to the man who has not had his resting-place in a woman's heart?"

And it matters not that woman seems to be occupied in the realm of the trivial and passing; always she is within the realm where men are strangers, and where they should come with uncovered heads.

"With reverence must we draw

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near to them, be they lowly or arrogant, inattentive or lost in dreams, be they smiling still or plunged in tears; for they know the things we do not know, and have a lamp that we have lost."

Our eyes have been blinded through their lack of use; in the realm of the spirit, where one is intimate with the secret of life, woman must be the eyes of the soul . . .

"For women are indeed the veiled sisters of all the great things we do not see."

S.
OLIVE
SCHREINER

Before the spiritual emancipation comes the economic emancipation. Woman cannot achieve personality in a cage—even in a gilded cage. She must live in a larger world and know the need for a more universal mothering.

In *Woman and Labor* Olive Schreiner has written one of the clearest books that the woman movement has produced. There she has shown us that the forces which have

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brought about what seems to many to be the economic enslavement and the coarsening of woman, are precisely the forces to lead to her liberation. No summary of *Woman and Labor* is possible. One must read every paragraph, and that task is made easy by the alluring power of Mrs. Schreiner's sentences.

But one may have the very essence of Olive Schreiner's message to woman in *Three Dreams in a Desert*.

"As I traveled across an African plain the sun shone down hotly. Then I drew my horse up under a mimosa-tree, and I took the saddle from him and left him to feed among the parched bushes. And all to right and to left stretched the brown earth. And I sat down under the tree, because the heat beat fiercely, and all along the horizon the air throbbed. And after a while a heavy drowsiness came over me, and I laid my head down against my saddle, and I fell asleep there. And

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in my sleep, I had a curious dream.

"I thought I stood on the border of a great desert, and the sand blew about everywhere. And I thought I saw two great figures like beasts of burden of the desert, and one lay upon the sand with its neck stretched out, and one stood by it. And I looked curiously at the one that lay upon the ground, for it had a great burden on its back, and the sand was thick about it so that it seemed to have piled over it for centuries.

"And I looked very curiously at it. And there stood one beside me watching. And I said to him, 'What is this huge creature who lies here on the sand?'

"And he said, 'This is woman; she that bears men in her body.'

"And I said, 'Why does she lie here motionless with the sand piled round her?'

"And he answered, 'Listen, I will tell you! Ages and ages long she has lain here, and the wind has blown over her. The oldest, oldest,

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oldest man living has never seen her move; the oldest, oldest book records that she lay here then, as she lies here now, with the sand about her. But listen! Older than the oldest book, older than the oldest recorded memory of man, on the Rocks of Language, on the hard-baked clay of Ancient Customs, now crumbling to decay, are found the marks of her footsteps! Side by side with his who stands beside her you may trace them; and you know that she who now lies there once wandered free over the rocks with him.'

"And I said, 'Why does she lie there now?'

"And he said, 'I take it ages ago the Age-of-dominion-of-muscular-force found her, and when she stooped low to give suck to her young, and her back was broad, he put his burden of subjection onto it, and tied it on with the broad band of Inevitable Necessity. Then she looked at the earth and the sky, and knew there was no hope for her; and she lay

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down on the sand with the burden she could not loosen. Ever since she has lain here. And the ages have come, and the ages have gone, but the band of Inevitable Necessity has not been cut.'

"And I looked and saw in her eyes the terrible patience of the centuries; the ground was wet with her tears, and her nostrils blew up the sand.

"And I said, 'Has she ever tried to move?'

"And he said, 'Sometimes a limb has quivered. But she is wise; she knows she cannot rise with the burden on her.'

"And I said, 'Why does not he who stands by her leave her and go on?'

"And he said, 'He cannot. Look—.'

"And I saw a broad band passing along the ground from one to the other, and it bound them together.

"He said, 'While she lies there, he must stand and look across the desert.'

"And I said, 'Does he know why he cannot move?'

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“And he said, ‘No.’

“And I heard a sound of something cracking, and I looked, and I saw the band that bound the burden on to her back broken asunder; and the burden rolled on to the ground.

“And I said, ‘What is that?’

“And he said, ‘The Age-of-muscular-force is dead. The Age-of-nervous-force has killed him with the knife he holds in his hand; and silently and invisibly he has crept up to the woman, and with that knife of Mechanical Invention he has cut the band that bound the burden to her back. The Inevitable Necessity is broken. She might rise now.’

“And I saw that she still lay motionless on the sand, with her eyes open and her neck stretched out. And she seemed to look for something on the far-off border of the desert that never came. And I wondered if she were awake or asleep. And as I looked her body quivered, and a light came into her eyes, like when a sunbeam breaks into a dark room.

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"I said, 'What is it?'

"He whispered, 'Hush! the thought has come to her, "Might I not rise?"'

"And I looked. And she raised her head from the sand, and I saw the dent where her neck had lain so long. And she looked at the earth, and she looked at the sky, and she looked at him who stood by her; but he looked out across the desert.

"And I saw her body quiver; and she pressed her front knees to the earth, and veins stood out; and I cried, 'She is going to rise!'

"But only her sides heaved, and she lay still where she was.

"But her head she held up; she did not lay it down again. And he beside me said, 'She is very weak. See, her legs have been crushed under her so long.'

"And I saw the creature struggle; and the drops stood out on her.

"And I said, 'Surely he who stands beside her will help her?'

"And he beside me answered, 'He cannot help her; *she must help herself.*'

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Let her struggle till she is strong.'

"And I cried, 'At least he will not hinder her! See, he moves further from her, and tightens the cord between them, and he drags her down.'

"And he answered, 'He does not understand. When she moves she draws the band that binds them, and hurts him, and he moves further from her. The day will come when he will understand, and will know what she is doing. Let her once stagger on to her knees. In that day he will stand close to her, and look into her eyes with sympathy.'

"And she stretched her neck, and the drops fell from her. And the creature rose an inch from the earth and sank back.

"And I cried, 'Oh, she is too weak! she cannot walk! The long years have taken all her strength from her. Can she never move?'

"And he answered me, 'See the light in her eyes!'

"And slowly the creature staggered on to its knees.

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“And I awoke; and all to the east and to the west stretched the barren earth, with the dry bushes on it. The ants ran up and down in the red sand, and the heat beat fiercely. I looked up through the thin branches of the tree at the blue sky overhead. I stretched myself, and I mused over the dream I had had. And I fell asleep again, with my head on my saddle. And in the fierce heat I had another dream.

“I saw a desert and I saw a woman coming out of it. And she came to the bank of a dark river; and the bank was steep and high. And on it an old man met her, who had a long white beard; and a stick that curled was in his hand, and on it was written Reason. And he asked her what she wanted; and she said, ‘I am woman; and I am seeking for the land of Freedom.’

“And he said, ‘It is before you.’

“And she said, ‘I see nothing before me but a dark flowing river, and a bank steep and high, and cuttings

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here and there with heavy sand in them.'

"And he said, 'And beyond that?'

"She said, 'I see nothing, but sometimes, when I shade my eyes with my hand, I think I see on the further bank trees and hills, and the sun shining on them!'

"He said, 'That is the Land of Freedom.'

"She said, 'How am I to get there?'

"He said, 'There is one way, and one only. Down the banks of Labor, through the water of Suffering. There is no other.'

"She said, 'Is there no bridge?'

"He answered, 'None.'

"She said, 'Is the water deep?'

"He said, 'Deep.'

"She said, 'Is the floor worn?'

"He said, 'It is. Your foot may slip at any time, and you may be lost.'

"She said, 'Have any crossed all ready?'

"He said, 'Some have *tried!*'

"She said, 'Is there a track to show where the best fording is?'

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“He said, ‘It has to be made.’

“She shaded her eyes with her hand and she said, ‘I will go.’

“And he said, ‘You must take off the clothes you wore in the desert; they are dragged down by them who go into the water so clothed.’

“And she threw from her gladly the mantle of Ancient-received-opinions she wore, for it was worn full of holes. And she took the girdle from her waist that she had treasured so long, and the moths flew out of it in a cloud. And he said, ‘Take the shoes of dependence off your feet.’

“And she stood there naked, but for one white garment, that clung close to her.

“And he said, ‘That you may keep. So they wear clothes in the Land of Freedom. In the water it buoys; it always swims.’

“And I saw on its breast was written Truth; and it was white; the sun had not often shone on it; the other clothes had covered it up. And he said, ‘Take this stick; hold it fast.

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In that day when it slips from your hand you are lost. Put it down before you; feel your way; where it cannot find a bottom do not set your foot.'

"And she said, 'I am ready; let me go.'

"And he said, 'No—but stay; what is that—in your breast?'

"She was silent.

"He said, 'Open it, and let me see.'

"And she opened it. And against her breast was a tiny thing, who drank from it, and the yellow curls above his forehead pressed against it; and his knees were drawn up to her, and he held her breast fast with his hands.

"And Reason said, 'Who is he, and what is he doing here?'

"And she said, 'See his little wings—'

"And Reason said, 'Put him down.'

"And she said, 'He is asleep, and he is drinking! I will carry him to the Land of Freedom. He has been a child so long, so long, I have car-

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ried him. In the Land of Freedom he will be a man. We will walk together there and his great white wings will overshadow me. He has lisped one word only to me in the desert—"Passion!" I have dreamed he might learn to say "Friendship" in that land.

"And Reason said, 'Put him down.'

"And she said, 'I will carry him so—with one arm and with the other I will fight the water.'

"He said, 'Lay him down on the ground. When you are in the water you will forget to fight, you will think only of him. Lay him down.' He said, 'He will not die. When he finds you have left him alone he will open his wings and fly. He will be in the Land of Freedom before you. Those who reach the Land of Freedom, the first hand they see stretching down the bank to help them shall be Love's. He will be a man then, not a child. In your breast he cannot thrive; put him down that he may grow.'

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"And she took her bosom from his mouth, and he bit her, so that the blood ran down on to the ground. And she laid him down on the earth; and she covered her wound. And she bent and stroked his wings. And I saw the hair on her forehead turn white as snow, and she had changed from youth to age.

"And she stood far off on the bank of the river. And she said, 'For what do I go to this far land which no one has ever reached? *Oh, I am alone! I am utterly alone!*'

"And Reason, that old man, said to her, 'Silence! what do you hear?'

"And she listened intently, and she said, 'I hear a sound of feet, a thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, and they beat this way!'

"He said, 'They are the feet of those that shall follow you. Lead on! Make a track to the water's edge! Where you stand now, the ground will be beaten flat by ten thousand times ten thousand feet.'

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And he said, 'Have you seen the locusts how they cross the stream? First one comes down to the water edge, and it is swept away, and then another comes, and then another, and then another, and at last with their bodies piled a bridge is built and the rest pass over.'

"She said, 'And, of those that come first, some are swept away, and are heard of no more; their bodies do not even build the bridge?'

"'And are swept away, and are heard of no more—and what of that?' he said.

"'And what of that . . .' she said.

"'They make a track to the water's edge.'

"'They make a track to the water's edge . . .' And she said, 'Over that bridge which shall be built with our bodies who will pass?'

"He said, '*The entire human race.*'

"And the woman grasped her staff.

"And I saw her turn down that dark path to the river.

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“And I awoke; and all about me was the yellow afternoon light; the sinking sun lit up the fingers of the milk-bushes; and my horse stood by me quietly feeding. And I turned on my side, and I watched the ants run by thousands in the red sand. I thought I would go on my way now—the afternoon was cooler. Then a drowsiness crept over me again, and I lay back my head and fell asleep.

“And I dreamed a dream.

“I dreamed I saw a land. And on the hills walked brave women and brave men, hand in hand. And they looked into each other’s eyes, and they were not afraid.

“And I saw the women also hold each other’s hands.

“And I said to him beside me, ‘What place is this?’

“And he said, ‘This is heaven.’

“And I said, ‘Where is it?’

“And he answered, ‘On earth.’

“And I said, ‘When shall these things be?’

“And he answered, ‘*In the future.*’”

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WALT
WHITMAN^{6.}

Without romantic sentiment, Walt Whitman has given to the world an impersonal, yet withal a vital poetry, expressive of his deep reverence for and his belief in woman and sex-equality.

Too often has his poetry been criticized as coarse and vulgar, when it is only that the interpretation has been personal. For while Whitman is not given to vague and abstract concepts of "humanity," while he everywhere, in his treatment of the human, means men and women, still it must be remembered that Whitman is speaking always in terms of something bigger than ourselves, which gives a cosmic significance to our acts. In that passage which has given such offense, beginning, "I do not hurt you more than is needful . . .", it is apparent that he means the Life Force as expressed to woman in the bearing of the child; and while we may be pained because of a too powerful realism, we must not overlook the superior inclusive-

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ness and daring of our most original,
our most democratic American poet.

Here, then, is his manifesto—

“I am the poet of the woman the
same as the man,
And I say it is as great to be a woman
as to be a man,
And I say there is nothing greater
than the mother of men.”

To Whitman, woman must be no
weak dependent, and he again and
again exhorts—

“Daughters of the Land, did you
wait for your poet?
Anticipate the best women;
I say an unnumbered new race of
hardy and well-defined women are
to spread through all these States.
I say a girl fit for these States must
be free, capable, dauntless, just
the same as a boy.”

And in Whitman’s Great City the
test is that it should be one—

“Where women walk in public pro-

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cessions in the streets, the same as the men,

Where they enter the public assembly and take places the same as the men, and are appealed to by the orators the same as the men,

Where the city of the faithfulest friends stands,

Where the city of the cleanliness of the sexes stands,

Where the city of the healthiest fathers stands,

Where the city of the best-bodied mothers stands,

There the greatest city stands."

Woman, to the great cosmic democrat, must be among the companions in progress, for "They, too, are on the road . . . They are the greatest women!"

^{7.}
**ELLEN
KEY** In Ellen Key the woman movement has found a leader who expresses most perfectly the old fundamental truths of love's place in life, and who has not overlooked, in her

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eagerness for change in outward circumstances, the need for spiritual conservation. And yet Ellen Key is a radical, a breaker of images, a creator of new values, a maker of new tables. But the tables of the new law are not of stone; they are of the same stuff that hearts are made of.

If *Monna Vanna* is a gospel for the younger women, *Love and Marriage* is a whole bible. Here we find the very heart of Ellen Key in a style that reminds one now of Emerson and again of Nietzsche, but which is always an expression of the profoundest convictions of Ellen Key.

In the following excerpts from the chapters on *The Evolution of Love* and *Love's Selection*, we have the most intimate revelation of what love means to woman:

"An ever greater number know that love is absorption into that spirit in which one's own finds its foothold without losing its freedom; the nearness of that heart which stills the

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disquiet in our own; that attentive ear which catches what is unspoken or unspeakable; the clear sight of those eyes which see the realization of our best possibilities; the touch of those hands which, dying, we would feel closed on our own. When two souls have joys which the senses share, and when the senses have delights which the souls ennable, then the result is neither desire nor friendship."

Then follows a rebuke to those mid-Victorian women who in the name of purity have denied passion:

"Soulful people, especially women, have hitherto only loved partially. But when sensuousness—in alliance with the mission of the race—regains its ancient dignity, then the power of giving erotic rapture will not be the monopoly of him who is inhuman in his love. The wise virgins' deadly sin against love is that they disdained to learn of the foolish ones the secret of fascination; that they would know none of the thousand

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things that bind a man's senses or lay hold on his soul; that they regarded the power to please as equivalent to the will to betray. When all women who can love are also able to make goodness fascinating and completeness of personality intoxicating, then Imogen will conquer Cleopatra."

"As yet the charming ones are not always good, the good not always charming, and the majority neither good nor charming. During this transition between an old and a new womanliness it is natural that she should be strongest who unites in herself—

Eve, Joconde, et Delila."

Ellen Key would have us ever bear in mind, that, for her, the essential element in the love-life is spirit. She rebukes the sensualist, warns us against those more unstable radicals who would use her teaching as excuse for those frequent violations of good taste which, all too often,

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are the stumbling-blocks that excite the enmity of critics.

"The conviction that sensuousness can only be controlled through being spiritualized is what directs those women who are now hoping to convert men, not to the duty of monogamy, but to the joy of unity."

After this conversion:

"It will then be seen that they were wrong who now think that—while God walked in Paradise and founded marriage—the devil went about in the wilderness and instituted love."

But this Eve-Lilith who is soulfully sensuous will make more exacting demands of her mate, for:

"Every developed modern woman wishes to be loved not *en male* but *en artiste*. Only a man whom she feels to possess an artist's joy in her, and who shows this joy in discreet and delicate contact with her soul as with her body, can retain the love of the modern woman. She will belong only to a man who longs for

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her always, even when he holds her in his arms. And when such a woman exclaims: 'You desire me, but you cannot caress, you cannot listen then that man is doomed.'

Sociology follows philosophy, and the theory must be applied to life. But Ellen Key takes the pains to distinguish love's freedom from what has wildly and excitedly been called "free-love." The latter she dismisses as unworthy, the former she withdraws as a sacred right of personality.

"Freedom for love's selection, under conditions favorable to the race; limitation of the freedom, not of love, but of procreation, when the conditions are unfavorable to the race—this is the line of life."

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III.

So, then, the older phase of the woman movement is passing away that the larger thing which we call Feminism may come. It is dying that Feminism may live. In fact, Feminism is the only excuse for the existence of the older and narrower movement. It was the voice crying in the wilderness, and if it was a somewhat raucous voice, it nevertheless was followed by the coming of the thing it heralded.

But Feminism has had for the world many surprises. Contrary to the philosophers who had been emphasizing the fact of her conservative function in life, woman has proved, on occasion, to be a radical of radicals. In her indignation over the immobility of British Parliament she has shown a courage seldom equalled in the history of the world. In the recent utterances of such splendid women as Dora Marsden and Emma Goldman, it is found

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that women, even more than men, can show, in the interest of life, a great contempt for our immoral laws of marriage and divorce, our inane sputterings about illegitimacy, and our codified indifference to the spiritual welfare of the child.

One may be led to ask, however, In what does woman's radicalism consist? In the answer to this question one finds one's self quite in accord with the writings of Professor W. I. Thomas, who has held a brief for woman's conservatism. Woman is radical in the interest of conservatism. And she is just awakening to the fact that her past conservatism has been a wasting of life and a checking of progress. This awakening is responsible for the change of front.

Woman's conservatism, however, has been, and to a large extent still is, the main support for conventional morality. To this extent she is the enemy of the on going life process, and out of harmony with the spirit

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of man. But we find that here as elsewhere woman's heart has been in the right, even though her head has been at fault. She has thought to be supporting life, to be protecting the home, and religion and her child. The mere militant suffragist, who is apt to be a bit of an old maid and a puritan, persists in this error, and, joining hands with the clergy, and other sexless Comstockians, loses no opportunity for making crusades against what she conceives to be of the flesh and the devil. She does not hesitate to become a literary and dramatic critic, art censor, sociologist, theologian, criminologist, or statesman. Indeed she becomes in turn all of these without embarrassment or apology, to the great annoyance of healthy people and artists.

But the modern Feminist does not share this confusion. She knows her Westermarck and her Nietzsche, and sees that conventional morality does not exist for life's sake, but for property's sake; not for religion's

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sake, but for the sake of the narrow Paulinized churchman. And she is apt to have no great reverence for what to her is an effete and formal morality. Life is all for the eager forward - reaching souls, on the stretch for the things that lie ahead; it will have none of the pious restraints of dogma. The modern Feminists, I suspect, smile knowingly over the church-warden's story in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*. They suspect rule-of-thumb moralities, and refuse to pledge their souls upon the shibboleths of tradition. This, not that there may be license, but that education and good taste may join hands to give us liberty. For while the Feminist declares against vice no less heartily than her sister, she defers more readily to the deeper remedies of life, to the sounder sociology, and to the sanity born of wisdom.

Because she believes in morality, she is skeptical of ethics; because she believes in life, she will make

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conventions decorative and not definitive. Didn't someone once say that "Cavaliers and Puritans are interesting for their costumes and not for their convictions?"

And now that woman is to be no longer blinded about the truths of life, now that she may express her woman-nature in some social way, innumerable evils that heretofore seemed well nigh incurable, are being brought within the reach of a more scientific sociology. And this by the wholesome modern woman and not by the Christian-Endeavored ladies who have made such a sad muddle of things in so many leading cities of America. In a recent brilliant article by Cornelia Dodd Brown, we are told that our professional reformers, both men and women, are neuters, and that they should be set about the detail work of civilization, leaving the more important task of social direction and law making, to those men and women who are fully alive, sex-

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conscious, and possessed of personality. The fact that we have not done this, she points out, is one of the blunders of our civilization.

That in the woman movement are to be found leaders like these, having such sanity, combined with all the spiritual fineness of our Victorian mothers, bringing that wealth of intuitive understanding, which is woman's inheritance, is a thing to make the world rejoice as it faces the future.

Such women, when they have come to express their will more fully in social institutions, will not for long tolerate the hideous barbarity of war. The pretext of duty will not again be enough to make women bear children for states whose existence is dependent upon militarism, and whose advance to power means the crushing and maiming of life.

Indeed the modern woman, while knowing her supreme task to be that of motherhood, knows that that task

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is often best fulfilled in refusing to bear children of flesh and blood. Her great task is to raise the level of racial quality; to mother the better instincts in mankind; to give birth to new spirit-children, born of great companionships. Her great task, in a word, will be to keep alive the child in the heart of mankind; that task suggested by Frederick Nietzsche. Woman knows that love is for the enhancement of the individual as well as for the enlargement of the race. For woman, whether in politics, where she is needed, or in business, where her influence uplifts, or in the great fields of social service, where her healing touch always brings life, will always be mother of men; and now she will be a better mother, for she will be the open-eyed companion of men.

When the work is wholly done, when the newness of woman's entrance into the larger life is over, when the old prejudices have been

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left behind, when intuition and reason are both seen to be ways to truth, and necessary in any life solution,—then it will be possible for man and woman together, and both free, body and soul, to face the more fundamental problems of life as their high spiritual business. Their chief concern will be the things that the world in its heart of hearts has all along been asking: What are the Rights of the Spirit? What is the Meaning of Life? How shall the World be Remoulded Nearer to the Heart's Desire?

In that day the Lord of Life may say to these new earth-children what Herakles said in the closing lines of George Cabot Lodge's great drama:

*All that there is at all I give to you!—Lo,
Yours is the Universe and yours the
Soul,
And life and labor and liberty are
yours
To understand and blend them into one!
All that there is I give to you, and no less,*

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*And nothing more!—no phantoms and
vain dreams,
No spectral fears and false expectan-
cies,
No empty honor, no vain glorious joy.
These are destroyed—but not that, in
their stead,
Other, tho lordlier, vain imaginings
And awful ghosts and unsubstantial
things
Should fill the shadows whence their
shapes are gone;—
Rather are they destroyed that in their
room
The soul may go abroad at last,
Gravely and quietly, as befits the soul;
And freely, and masterfully and wisely
dwell
In the waste, spacious realm, with-
held so long!*

NOTE

If the primary purpose for which this little book was written has been fulfilled, the reader will desire a more thorough acquaintance with the extensive literature of Feminism and will wish, at the very outset, to become familiar with its greater writers, such as Ellen Key and Olive Schreiner. Certainly Ellen Key's *Love and Marriage, Love and Ethics* and *The Woman Movement* should be studied with diligence. These should be followed by Olive Schreiner's *Woman and Labor*, Mary Roberts Coolidge's *Why Women Are So*, C. Gasquoine Hartley's *Truth About Woman*, Rosa Mayreder's *Survey of the Woman Problem*,* Floyd Dell's *Women as World Builders*, and Mary Austin's *Love and the Soul Maker*.

After reading such books as are suggested above, it would be well to look carefully to the scientific foundations in such admirable works as Havelock Ellis' *Man and Woman*, W. I. Thomas' *Sex and Society*, and to many richly suggestive chapters in Westermarck's *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, Lester F. Ward's *Pure Sociology*, Crawley's *Mystic*

*In this compelling work, note especially the chapters on *The Tyranny of the North* and *Vistas of Individuality*.

NOTE

Rose, and O. T. Mason's *Woman's Share in Primitive Culture*. In this field also, Edward Carpenter's *Some Intermediate Types*, and *Love's Coming of Age* furnish a basis for a prophecy of the future relation of the sexes quite in accord with the spirit of Feminism in that they suggest the coming of what Rosa Mayreder has called the synthetic types of men and women.

And, finally, to that class of readers who are not content with dwelling in the realms of pure reason, and who scorn the *laissez faire* attitudinizing of many professed radicals, surely the more aggressive journals of the Feminist movement will be welcome. Dora Marsden's *Egoist*, published in London, Margaret Anderson's *Little Review* of Chicago, and the ever insistent *Masses*, published in New York by Max Eastman and Floyd Dell, are among the more powerful propaganda magazines that deserve loyal support.

HERE ENDS "THE SOUL OF WOMAN,"
BEING AN INTERPRETATION OF THE
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